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critical year, "Dick's Parliament" (p. 173), the Rump, the restored Long Parliament. There is even something on the elections to the Convention Parliament. The letters are brief, there is more of comment than of information; they are nevertheless a real contribution to the history of Parliament.

To the student of Parliament perhaps the most interesting of the letters is that of "Mr. Miles", dated May 9, 1659, which tells of the efforts of the leading Presbyterians of the Long Parliament to regain their seats in the Rump. Part of the letter bears quoting because of the information it adds to Prynne's narrative (*Old Parliamentary History*, XXI. 384-386). To the list of names given there, it adds those of Sir William Waller and Richard Browne, indicating clearly that they were distinct from Prynne's group. They "challenged their right for themselves". But there came also "a number more considerable of that packe [Prynne, etc., who had presented themselves on the 7th] that would usurpe the howse to themselves, and indeede they were the chiefe assertors of the old cause and first interrupted by Oliver's army. Of this party was Mr. William Perpoint, whoe never offered to sitt in the howse (since Prides forcible exemsion) till this tyme" (p. 134). This not only adds three important names to the list but helps to fill in a serious gap in our knowledge of Pierrepont. Even more valuable is this in the light of the following from a letter of March 9, 1660: "Mr. Perpoint met Monke on his journey and had a whole days discourse in their coach together . . . Monke relies much on him" (p. 194). We are no longer surprised to find Pierrepont heading the list of the new Council of State (*C. J.*, VII. 849).

Though the publication of the correspondence of Sir Edward Nicholas has extended over so long a period of time (1886-1920), the four volumes are similar in plan and treatment. That this is true of the text is a matter for regret. One is sorry to find the same adherence to the old form of letters. The interchanged use of *u* and *v*, *i* and *j*, might be pardoned, but not *y^e* as an abbreviation of *the*. Yet even *y^e* might be forgiven, as a concession to antiquarianism, if the editor did not at the same time follow modern usage by introducing quotation-marks, the interrogation-point, and the apostrophe to mark the possessive case. But it is a satisfaction to find this last volume following the plan of the others as regards their very helpful notes and index.

FRANCES HELEN RELF.

Matthew Prior: a Study of his Public Career and Correspondence.

By L. G. WICKHAM LEGG, Fellow and Tutor of New College, Oxford. (Cambridge: University Press. 1921. Pp. x, 348. 22s. 6d.)

PRIOR started life as a waiting boy in a London tavern. He rose rapidly in the world and soon became the companion of poets, politicians,

diplomats, and nobles of the first rank. Nevertheless, he is one of the most pitiful figures of the early eighteenth century, for he was never quite of the group with whom he associated. He was for some time sole English representative in Paris, yet he was never able to secure the rank to which his talents entitled him, largely because Queen Anne "thought it very wrong to send people abroad of mean extraction". Though he performed the essential duties of an ambassador, his official position was always ambiguous. His salary and expense money, moreover, were ever grossly inadequate to maintain an establishment worthy of the nation he represented. Times without number he humbly begged official superiors and men of influence at court to secure him an income for his legitimate needs, but all to so little avail, that at the moment of his recall he was in imminent danger of being held in Paris for failure to pay the debts he had incurred as a diplomat.

He seems, indeed, a puppet in the hands of fate. At least twice he was on the point of receiving suitable official recognition. Once he was thwarted by Louis XIV.'s acceptance of the will of Charles II. of Spain, the perennial invalid who passed away at last only after three partition treaties had been made in anticipation of his death; a second time Prior was disappointed by the death of Anne and the overthrow of his Tory friends—two events which spelled for him temporary imprisonment and permanent political oblivion. Yet he had proved of inestimable service to William III. in the trying years which witnessed the formation of the coalition against France, and assisted Bolingbroke in the tiresome, intricate negotiations preliminary to the Treaty of Utrecht.

Important as he was in diplomacy, Prior is better known as a poet, for he represents in poetry better than any one else, perhaps, the transition from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. He is clearly a distant descendant of the Elizabethans, although this element is distinct only in his earlier poems, and then sometimes as little more than a faint flicker.

In spite of his public and literary career no serious biography of Prior appeared until that of Bickley in 1914. This writer emphasized the poetry of Prior, but the work under review stresses his political activity. Mr. Legg does, however, insist that far too little attention has been paid to Prior's prose, largely perhaps because such past masters of prose style as Swift and Addison flourished in his day. New light is thrown upon the preliminary negotiations from 1711 to 1713, indicating clearly that the Congress of Utrecht did little more than ratify the things already agreed upon by the French and English diplomats. Although Prior was suspected of Jacobitism, Mr. Legg suggests that Prior, far from being friendly to the exiled Stuarts, spied upon them for the benefit of the English ministries. The book also indicates that Prior held his place on the Board of Trade and Plantations for some time in spite of the Duchess of Marlborough, because the duke did not share her antipathy for Prior. Additional evidence from unpublished manuscripts shows the strong-

mindedness or stubbornness of the queen. One of Prior's letters sets forth in a clear way the political faith of the Tory that the monarch should be above and between parties.

On the period before 1711 this book is too largely a repetition of the work done by Bickley. Some of the same documents are printed *in extenso*, and several quotations are almost identical in scope and purpose. The preface of Mr. Legg's book intimates that it was perhaps practically completed before Bickley's work appeared. At least it was not sufficiently revised thereafter to rid it of repetitions. The second half of the book, however, is a distinct contribution to the subject, both in its literary and diplomatic aspects. The author insists too strongly, perhaps, upon the sincerity of Louis XIV.'s desire for peace in 1709, although this raises, of course, the much-controverted question of Marlborough's attitude in the same negotiations: Prior's last letter deserves more careful annotation (pp. 271-272). Shrewsbury became lord chamberlain in April, not in August, 1710 (p. 133). Fortunately Mr. Legg has given us of his extensive knowledge of diplomacy in the "Biographical Notes" (pp. 331-336), which identify most of the characters mentioned in Prior's letters.

WILLIAM THOMAS MORGAN.

Revolution from 1789 to 1906. Documents selected and edited with Notes and Introductions by R. W. POSTGATE. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1921. Pp. xvi, 400. \$4.50.)

THE innumerable revolutions and attempts at revolution which have characterized the history of the past decade have begun to have their effect on history and its related activities. As after 1789 and 1848 and 1871 men turned their attention to revolutionary activities, endeavoring to explain and analyze the new phenomena, so now, looking back over the past century and a half in the light of the past ten years, there has begun comparative study of revolutionary movements, of which the present volume is an example. And as the first step in an intelligent appreciation of the subject is the collection of material, Mr. Postgate has done well to bring together the documents in the case.

He follows the temper of the times and the group to which he belongs, for to him revolution connotes chiefly social change or attempted change. His documents are for the most part of that character, and his comment and introductions are primarily of that nature. There is, for instance, a disproportionate amount of material in the documents of the French Revolution relating to communism, and that note prevails throughout the book. It does, no doubt, illuminate the career of communistic thought, but it is not fair to call a collection based on such an idea representative of revolution as a whole. For there have been political revolutions, too; and a series of documents relating to Italy which omits the Risorgimento and the name of Cavour, and which gives to it less than four pages of docu-